

# Edwardsville drops 7-1 New Year's decision to Oakville

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer  
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EAST ALTON – Edwardsville's Mid-States hockey team has hit a bit of a slump as of late, and Tiger coach Jason Walker thinks he knows why.

“Inconsistency,” Walker said following a 7-1 MSCHA Municipal Conference loss to Oakville New Year's night at East Alton Ice Arena. “Just inconsistency – we've got to find a way to be better,” Walker said.

The Tigers fell to 6-8-2 (14 points) overall on the season, 3-8-2 (eight points) in the conference; Oakville improved to 8-6-0 (16 points) on the season overall, 6-6-0 (12 points) in the Muny.

“There's moments in the game where we're looking good and then we make some mistakes and it ends up biting us in the foot,” Walker said. “That's hockey; you play good teams like that and they take advantage of those mistakes; we've got to do better.

“It's been mistakes we've made with the puck in certain areas of the ice we can't make. On a positive note, we're creating a lot of chances and credit to their goalie (Chance Christopher) – he was outstanding. We've got to bear down and put some of those away.”

Prior to Monday's loss to Oakville, Edwardsville dropped a 10-1 Saturday night decision to St. Louis University High in Webster Groves.

Oakville opened the scoring Monday night with a Zach Daniels goal from Grant Griffin and Connor Bailey at 4:12 of the first period, which was followed four minutes later from a shorthanded Connor Bailey goal assisted by his brother Chase Bradley to put Oakville up 2-0; Edwardsville got a goal back with 2:28 to go when Will Schuster scored past Christopher to cut the lead to 2-1, Mark Tucker assisting on the play.

That was as close as Edwardsville could come as Oakville got second-period goals from Matthew Thebeau and Jack Huffman to extend the lead to 4-1 and third-period goals from Chase Bradley, Connor Milligan and Griffin to close out the win.

Edwardsville had 23 shots on goal on the night, with Christopher turning back 22 of them; Oakville managed to fire 34 shots on goal, with Matthew Griffin recording 27 saves on the night. Edwardsville went 0-for-4 on the power play, while Oakville went 0-for-2 but did have a shorthanded goal.

The Tigers' next game is at EAIA at 8:30 p.m. Jan. 11 against SLUH.

“We've got to get back to work at practice and get better,” Walker said of the upcoming break for the Tigers. “We've been playing game after game after game for awhile; it'll be nice to get a few days off and get back at it in practice.”

